

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116594

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, EIND, BL

SUBJECT: GULF OIL

REF: LA PAZ 3382

1. BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR CAPRILES CALLED ON COUNTRY DIRECTOR AND DESK OFFICER THIS MORNING TO MAKE "FORMAL", ALBEIT VERBAL, REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT'S COOPERATION WITH GOB EFFORTS TO OBTAIN NAMES OF BOLIVIANS TO WHOM GULF MADE "POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS" IN YEARS PAST. CAPRILES SAID GOB NOW HAD RECEIVED TWO WRITTEN STATEMENTS FROM COMPANY IN ADDITION TO GULF TESTIMONY BEFORE CHURCH SUBCOMMITTEE STATING THAT SUCH PAYMENTS HAD BEEN MADE, BUT AS YET THE COMPANY HAD FAILED TO PROVIDE GOB WITH NAMES OF RECIPIENTS. HE NOTED THAT IF COMPANY COULD SPECIFY AMOUNTS PAID, GOB MUST ASSUME THAT THE COMPANY ALSO KNEW THE NAMES OF THE RECIPIENTS. HE SUGGESTED COMPANY WAS DELIBERATELY WITHHOLDING NAMES. CAPRILES REFERRED TO SERIOUS POLITICAL REPERCUSSION IN BOLIVIA AND URGENT NEED FOR THE INFORMATION SO THAT GOB COULD PROCEED AGAINST THOSE WHO MAY HAVE VIOLATED CONFIDENTIAL

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BOLIVIAN LAW AND THUS SILENCE ALLEGATIONS BY POLITICAL OPPONENTS THAT GOVERNMENT WAS SOMEHOW ATTEMPTING A COVER UP.

2. CAPRILES NOTED PUBLIC REFERENCES TO "SEC INVESTIGATION"

AND SAID THAT WHILE GOB WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS GULF FOR

INFORMATION, IT URGENTLY NEEDS DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION SOONER THROUGH SEC CHANNELS. COUNTRY DIRECTOR STATED THAT DEPARTMENT WISHED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE WITHIN EXISTING PROCEDURAL AND LEGAL LIMITS IN THIS COMPLEX MATTER. HE REMINDED CAPRILES THAT DEPARTMENT'S BASIC POSITION REMAINS THAT THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A MATTER BETWEEN GOB AND GULF. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS NOT FULLY INFORMED ON COMPLEXITIES OF "INVESTIGATION" BEING CONDUCTED, EXPLAINING THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT BY AGREEMENT BETWEEN FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, SEC AND GULF, MR. JOHN MCCLOY HAD BEEN DESIGNATED TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION. COUNTRY DIRECTOR STATED HE COULD GIVE NO ASSURANCES CONCERNING SEC'S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO BOLIVIA'S NEEDS IN THIS MATTER. HE FURTHER OBSERVED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT SEC OR FOR THAT MATTER FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN INFORMATION SOUGHT BY GOB SINCE INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED IN THE U.S. WAS PRINCIPALLY AIMED AT UNCOVERING VIOLATIONS OF STOCKHOLDERS' RIGHTS RATHER THAN IDENTIFYING RECIPIENTS OF OVERSEAS PAYMENTS.

3. CAPRILES STATED THAT GOB MIGHT CONSIDER SENDING INVESTIGATING TEAM OF EXPERTS TO WASHINGTON TO COORDINATE EFFORTS WITH SEC (AS IN HONDURAN CASE) AND THAT GOB WOULD TAKE LEGAL ACTION IN BOLIVIA TO REQUIRE GULF TO DIVULGE NAMES. CAPRILES REITERATED THAT GOB SPECIFICALLY WANTED NAMES OF RECIPIENTS, DATES ON WHICH PAYMENTS WERE MADE, EXACT AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS AND PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE MADE.

4. COUNTRY DIRECTOR PROMISED TO REVIEW MATTER WITHIN DEPARTMENT ON URGENT BASIS IN ORDER TO GIVE EARLIEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE. BEGIN FYI: IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT DEPARTMENT WOULD IN ANY CASE WANT TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVEALING TO GOB NAMES OF BOLIVIANS ALLEGED TO HAVE RECEIVED SUCH PAYMENTS. THAT INFORMATION SHOULD COME FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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THE COMPANY ITSELF, WHETHER IT IS MADE KNOWN NOW OR FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF THE INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED BY MCCLOY AND THE ISSUANCE OF A REPORT IN WHICH THE INFORMATION IS INCLUDED. END FYI.

5. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FYI PORTION, FOREGOING MAY BE DRAWN ON BY EMBASSY TO RESPOND TO POSSIBLE GOB INQUIRIES. DEPARTMENT WILL COMMENT ASAP TO EMBASSY'S REQUEST FOR CLEARANCE ON PROPOSED DRAFT REPLY TO FOREIGN MINISTER'S NOTE ON THIS SUBJECT (REFTEL). THAT REPLY SHOULD INCORPORATE INFORMATION DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR CAPRILES' PRESENT DEMARCHE. INGERSOLL

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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